

## MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 30 minutes, with the first half of the time under the control of the majority leader or his designee and the second half of the time under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee.

The Senator from Nevada.

## ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that both sides, Republicans and Democrats, have their full 15 minutes for morning business.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, that would mean the vote for 12 o'clock may slip a little bit because of the time that is already indicated. I ask unanimous consent that the full hour also be given to each side on the time set for debate on the motion for cloture.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Nebraska.

## THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I want to briefly recognize the distinguished guest Chaplain this morning from Omaha, NE, Reverend Longbottom is a very important part of our community in Nebraska. His spiritual guidance, his involvement in so many civic activities has set him apart over the years, in part because he is one of those individuals who actually gets down into the universe of areas of concern and applies the spiritual to the practical. For that, our State has benefited greatly. I also wish to recognize Reverend Longbottom's wife Lori who accompanied him to Washington as well. We in Nebraska are very proud of the Longbottoms. I am very proud to say a few words about him. I particularly appreciated the President pro tempore allowing me to open the Senate to recognize my constituent and friend, Reverend Longbottom.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

## IRAQ

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the intelligence we had prior to going into Iraq and the decision that was made overwhelmingly—by I believe 77 votes in this body—to authorize the use of force against Iraq. Today we have received the copy of the Butler report in Great Britain talking about their intelligence failures as well. Lord Butler examined the intelligence the British Government had and found there were problems in their intelligence as well. But they did an in-depth assessment of what they knew then and what they know now.

I thought it was very interesting, since yesterday on this floor a question had been raised about the statement President Bush made in his address to a joint session of both Houses of Congress that Saddam Hussein had sought uranium from Africa.

Conclusion No. 499 in the Butler report is as follows:

We conclude that, on the basis of intelligence assessments at the time, covering both Niger and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the statements on Iraqi attempts to buy uranium from Africa in the Government's dossier and by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, were well-founded.

By extension, we also conclude that the statement in President Bush's State of the Union Address of 28 January, 2003, that the British Government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa was well-founded.

In other words, an examination by the committee, headed by Lord Butler, to examine intelligence produced by the British Intelligence Service was accurate, that Iraq was seeking uranium from Africa as part of its nuclear weapons program. So much for the charges by many—some in this body—that there was no basis for this statement that President Bush made, based on British intelligence that Iraq was seeking uranium from Africa and that it was not well-founded. It was. And on that, we now have a conclusion from Lord Butler that was the case.

I think the issue was more fully discussed, obviously, in the conclusions of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and in the separate opinion, separate findings produced by Chairman ROBERTS, to which I and other members of the committee signed off.

Today, as I came to work, I heard on the radio a very regrettable and unfortunate opinion piece by a writer from the Washington Post, saying that, obviously, President Bush should not have gone into Iraq, saying in effect that taking down Saddam Hussein was wrong. He was telling our troops, who are on the ground risking their lives—and too many who have given up their lives—we are fighting in vain. That is absolute nonsense. It is regrettable that we have forgotten during a time of war that, generally, politics stops at the water's edge.

As I have mentioned before on the floor, there seems to be a concerted effort by our friends in the other party to contend that, because the intelligence was not as good as it should have been, we should not have gone in and deposed the murderous tyrant who had not only slaughtered tens of thousands of his own people, the Kurds, invaded Kuwait, and threatened Saudi Arabia, but also provided a harbor for terrorists such as al-Qaida and Abu al-Zarqawi's group.

I have had the opportunity to talk to some of the young men and women who have put their lives on the line in Iraq. I would trust their judgment far more than I would trust a political hatchet job by a writer who is trying to score

political points against the President and the Vice President.

Let me go back to a couple of conclusions from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Conclusion 92, on page 345, says:

The CIA's examination of contacts, training, and safe haven and operational cooperation as indicators of a possible Iraq/al-Qaida relationship was a reasonable and objective approach to the question.

Conclusion 95, on page 347, says:

The CIA's assessment on safe haven—that al-Qaida or associated operatives were present in Baghdad and northeastern Iraq in an area under Kurdish control—was reasonable.

In other words, judgments were reasonable that this was a country harboring terrorists. Thinking back, do you know what the President said? He said that we are going to carry the war to the terrorists. We are going to go after them where they hide, where they take refuge. We wiped them out in Afghanistan and we had to go into Iraq where they were also gaining safe haven.

To say we are not significantly safer in the United States, or people around the world, our allies, and free people are not safer as a result of deposing Saddam Hussein is pure nonsense. Unfortunately, we are at war with the terrorists. The terrorists were in Iraq. They had access to the weapons of mass destruction that Saddam Hussein had produced in the past and was willing to produce in the future.

Over the last few days, we all have heard briefings on recent increased threats in the United States. Today, had we not acted in Iraq, we would be even more at risk to the possibility of terror, and the likelihood that those terrorist attacks would have included chemical or biological weapons would have been far greater.

Our examination of what happened, what was going on in Iraq, conducted after the war found there were significant production capabilities for chemical and biological weapons in Iraq. There were terrorists there who were seeking to gain access to these weapons. Did we find large stockpiles? No. Did we expect to find large stockpiles? No. At best, they said the amount of chemical and biological weapons would be less than would fill a swimming pool.

But the problem with these chemical and biological weapons, whether they be ricin, sarin gas, anthrax, or smallpox, very small amounts can cause significant death, damage, and destruction to the United States. The potential to kill people with these deadly biological and chemical weapons was terrific, and we are safer because we took him out.

Do we know if we have captured all of the weapons of mass destruction that he produced? No. We cannot know that. We will find out more, I believe, as the Iraqi Government takes steps, through its own security forces, to go after the known and suspected terrorists, to find where they are. We have

heard reports about chemical and biological weapons being dispersed. We cannot confirm where they are. We only hope and pray they are not in the hands of terrorists who have made their way to the United States. But only time will tell.

Conclusion 97, which is on page 348 of the Intelligence Committee report, concluded:

The CIA's judgment that Saddam Hussein, if sufficiently desperate, might employ terrorists with global reach—al-Qaida—to conduct terrorist attacks in the event of war, was reasonable.

And of course it was reasonable; after all, we already knew Saddam Hussein was supporting terrorists such as the Arab Liberation Front, and he was offering money to the families of suicide bombers, particularly Hamas. We know he had the ability to turn his manufacturing capabilities, with the scientists he had, into the production of chemical and biological weapons.

We know how tragic the terrorist attack of 9/11 was on our soil. We lost over 3,000 people. They used unconventional weapons—airplanes loaded with fuel—to cause those deaths. I tremor to think about what could happen if chemical or biological weapons were used in large areas where unsuspecting civilians are gathered in the United States.

After what happened on 9/11, we had many investigations saying why didn't we put all of those elements together? They were very fragmentary. We had walls that prevented us from sharing that information among our intelligence agencies. It would have been almost impossible, even in hindsight, to connect all the dots and know what was going to happen on 9/11.

After that, intelligence analysts were under great pressure to try to identify potential attacks on the United States, or the potential use by terrorists of weapons of mass destruction and they overstated many of those conclusions. But what we know from our own experience is that Saddam Hussein consistently engaged in a pattern of denial and deception. He made it very difficult to find out what he was doing. We know from his actions what a deadly, murderous terrorist he was. By removing the Saddam Hussein regime, we eliminated yet another front from which terrorists could operate safely; most importantly, we eliminated the possibility that Saddam's weapons programs in the future could be leveraged by terrorists who seek to destroy us.

Finding huge stockpiles of weapons was not the objective of going into Iraq. The failure to do so should not be taken as a measure of the lack of success in Iraq. Prime Minister Tony Blair today said, on receiving the Butler report, that we were right to go into Iraq. He has been a steadfast ally, and we commend him.

We also have the interim report of the Iraqi Survey Group. We spent a long time listening to Dr. David Kay in our closed sessions, but he has issued

an interim report that we can quote. That interim report noted finding "dozens of WMD-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations during the inspections that began in late 2002."

Some of these included, for example:

A clandestine network of laboratories and safehouses within the Iraqi Intelligence Service that contained equipment subject to U.N. monitoring and suitable for continuing CBW research.

That is chemical and biological weapons research.

A prison laboratory complex, possibly used in human testing of BW agents, that Iraqi officials working to prepare for U.N. inspections were explicitly ordered not to declare to the U.N.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, is there any time remaining on our side?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. No.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask for 1 more minute to conclude.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. I believe the Senator has 49 seconds remaining.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I will do the best I can with the time remaining to conclude.

Dr. David Kay said he thought "it was absolutely prudent" going into Iraq. He went on to say:

In fact, I think at the end of the inspection process, we'll paint a picture of Iraq that was far more dangerous than even we thought it was before the war. It was a system collapsing. It was a country that had the capability in weapons of mass destruction areas and in which terrorists, like ants to honey, were going after it.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina). The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I will use my leader time and reserve the time left under morning business for my colleagues.

#### INCREASING NUMBER OF UNINSURED FAMILIES IN AMERICA

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, this morning we were again reminded of how much remains to be done in addressing the health care crisis in America. Today's paper has this headline: "Medicare Law Is Seen Leading to Cuts in Drug Benefits for Retirees." According to the article, the government is now estimating that 3.8 million retirees who currently receive prescription drug benefits through their employers will see their coverage reduced or eliminated as a result of the Republican drug law passed last fall.

That is simply unacceptable, and it is only one of the many problems we are facing when it comes to health care. Over the past several years, the cost of health insurance has skyrocketed, and millions more Americans have found themselves uninsured.

A while back, I held a "living room meeting" on health care costs in Sioux Falls. An older, married couple came to that meeting. He's a veteran, 68 years old, with diabetes and congenital heart failure. She's 62, with cerebral palsy. Last year, shortly after the husband retired, this couple learned that the wife's bladder cancer had come back. This couple pays \$418 a month in health insurance premiums through COBRA, plus another \$400 a month for prescriptions, and more on top of that in co-pays for doctor visits. Soon, their COBRA eligibility will expire.

The husband is on a waiting list—a waiting list—to see a VA doctor. But they don't know how they will pay for the wife's health care after they lose their current insurance coverage. Individual coverage for a 62-year-old woman with cerebral palsy and cancer would be prohibitively expensive—if they could get it at all. So, after nearly 20 years of marriage, this couple is contemplating divorce as the only option for getting essential health care for the wife.

If this Senate wants to protect American families, let's discuss what we can do to make health care more affordable and accessible so that spouses don't have to consider divorcing each other in order to get essential health care.

Forty-four million Americans were uninsured in 2002—the most recent year for which figures are available. That's 2.4 million more Americans without health insurance than the year before—the largest 1-year increase in a decade. Eight-and-a-half-million of those 44 million Americans are children. Sixteen million are women, many in their child-bearing years.

As shocking as those figures are, they tell only half the story—literally. A new study conducted for Families USA, using census data, shows that almost 82 million Americans—one in three Americans younger than 65—were uninsured at some point in the last two years. Two thirds were uninsured for at least six months. Half were uninsured for 9 months or longer.

Who are these people? They're working people, mostly. Eighty percent of uninsured Americans live in families in which at least one adult works. But their employers don't offer health insurance, or their pay is so low they can't afford to buy it. A growing number are middle class. One in four had family incomes between \$55,000 and \$75,000.

In South Dakota, more than 27 percent of people younger than 65 were uninsured for at least some part of the last 2 years. That's 180,000 people living with the fear that they are just one serious illness or accident away from financial disaster.

In 14 States, according to the Families USA study, more than one-third of all people younger than 65 were uninsured for at least part of the last two years. One in three people. The State with the highest percentage of uninsured was Texas: 43.4 percent.